

## TOWN MEETING COORDINATING COMMITTEE

### Fiscal Year 2012

The Town Meeting Coordinating Committee (TMCC) is a committee of seven Town Meeting members elected at Annual Town Meeting. It works to help Town Meeting function effectively as the Town's legislative body. The focus of its efforts is to help Town Meeting members and the public understand how Town Meeting works and to encourage informed voting on warrant articles. It also tries to ensure that meeting procedures and facilities serve sessions well. This year the committee met 22 times and there were 8 meetings of subcommittees.

During the year, TMCC activities included:

- Held meetings with the Moderator Harrison Gregg, Town Clerk Sandra Burgess, Town Manager John Musante, Director of Amherst Media Jim Lescault, and Library Director Sharon Sharry to discuss issues related to Town Meetings.
- Reviewed suggestions and concerns from event evaluations, the suggestion box, and messages received from the public and the Select Board.
- In response to complaints about hearing difficulties in Town Meeting and at public meetings, TMCC formed an Audio Subcommittee. It met with the Disability Access Advisory Committee, did a survey of hearing problems showing 59% of the responders had difficulty in the auditorium and 35% in the Town Room and met with Kris Pacunas, Ron Bohonowicz, Brian Ecclestone, Jim Lescault, Aaron Hayden and three hearing impaired Town Meeting members to identify possible solutions. A few months later new microphones were provided for the front tables at Town Meeting and the IT Department installed a new audience microphone system in the Town Room. Jim Lescault prepared a film on how not to hold a microphone. Work continues on how to improve the audio control system in the auditorium and help for those needing hearing support.
- Began a discussion with town and school technical staff about improving the control of light on the auditorium stage so that projected material can be seen more clearly.
- Made arrangements to regularize the provision of additional handicap parking for Town Meetings sessions and to improve signage for these spaces.
- Made a survey about starting Town Meeting sessions at 7:00 instead of 7:30.
- A subcommittee prepared a calendar for Town Meeting members and the public with information about the steps leading to warrant articles, such as those for the budget, zoning, etc., in order to encourage early participation in the process.
- Held a January forum **Our Town...Our Town Meeting** to inform residents about Town Meeting and how to run for election to become a member.
- Publicized the need for all 240 Town Meeting seats to be filled in the Town Election which followed redistricting and sent notices to all Town Meeting members letting them know they would have to run again, regardless of their term expiration date. After the election, new members received welcoming calls and a large orientation meeting was held before the opening session of Annual Town Meeting.
- Prepared information about Town Meeting and TMCC events for the two packet mailings before both town meetings.
- Held Warrant Review meetings co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters before the Special Fall Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting.
- Held bus tours to view sites related to warrant articles before both town meetings.

- Held precinct meetings.
- Made additions, updates and improvements to the TMCC page on the Town Website throughout the year.
- Sent timely information about Town Meeting, notices of important board and committee meetings, and documents about warrant articles to those subscribing to the TMCC Listserv.

The Town Meeting Coordinating Committee continually responds to questions, suggestions and concerns about Town Meeting and tries to find ways to inform members and the public effectively so that they may actively participate in town government.

#### TMCC Members

Margaret R. Roberts, Chair	H. Oldham Brooks – Resigned November 2011
Mary Streeter, Vice-Chair	Alan W. Powell – Appointed November 2011
Patricia G. Holland, Clerk	Carol Jeannette Gray
Nonny Burack, Stacker	Adrienne M. Terrizzi

Aaron A. Hayden, Select Board Liaison